



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 9 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
9 APRIL 1968

1. North Vietnam

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Intercepts reveal the movement of some 18 additional "groups," about 10,000 men, along the infiltration corridor within North Vietnam during the first week of April. [REDACTED]

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2. South Vietnam

The North Vietnamese are evidently preparing for a major military campaign in Kontum Province. Intercepts and aerial reconnaissance point to a high level of logistical activity in this area. Intercepts also disclose that the Communists intend to use 105-mm. howitzers in southwestern Kontum.

3. Israel-Jordan

The border situation has been quiet since yesterday morning when the Israelis crossed into Jordan, allegedly in "hot pursuit" of Arab terrorists.

The Israelis used troop-carrying helicopters in the operation, which lasted less than two hours. The Israelis claim they killed a number of saboteurs and destroyed a house at a commando base six miles inside Jordan; they listed no casualties of their own.

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4. South Korea

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5. Cyprus

The word from Nicosia is that the question of venue is the only remaining snag in plans for talks between representatives of the Greek and Turkish communities. There is considerable hope that the two sides will agree on a compromise--initial talks in Geneva and subsequent sessions on Cyprus. Some officials are mentioning 17 April as the likely starting date.

6. Canada

We do not expect Pierre Trudeau to make any quick changes in Canadian policy. He holds few of Pearson's foreign and domestic policies sacrosanct, but he will probably be cautious and deliberate in making changes.

Trudeau has promised a thorough review of Canada's defense ties, in part because he admits a lack of familiarity with them. Some further cuts in Canadian force contributions to NATO and UN peace-keeping operations could result from such a review, but a change in basic policy is much less likely.

Domestic problems, particularly the conciliation of Quebec, will be the first order of business.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Trinh/Collingwood Interview: Hanoi has published its version of Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh's interview with CBS newscaster Charles Collingwood.

According to Hanoi, the foreign minister was questioned about the Tet offensive, President Johnson's offer to limit the bombing of North Vietnam, the possibilities for talks between Hanoi and Washington, and the future of South Vietnam. He replied that the Tet offensive had convinced the "Pentagon" that military victory in Vietnam was not possible; he added that the President's restriction of the bombing met neither the demands of Hanoi nor those of world opinion. He said the US must "prove by words and deeds that it really wants serious contacts and talks." To do so it must unconditionally stop the bombing "and all other acts of war over all the territory of North Vietnam."

On the issue of reciprocity, Trinh said that the US demand for North Vietnamese "restraint" was "pure nonsense." Like North Vietnamese propaganda since the regime's 3 April statement, Trinh did not specifically rule out reciprocity, but he said this US condition was nothing but a "trick."

As Collingwood reported earlier, Trinh suggested "contacts" in Phnom Penh at the ambassadorial level.

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Trinh voiced confidence that the Saigon government would collapse without US support, and said that the program of the Liberation Front spelled out the Communist notion of a coalition government. He closed the interview with a message to the American people asking for their support in "thwarting the unjust policy of the Washington warmongers."

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Other Comment: Other Hanoi radio commentary on the proposed "contacts for talks" has not been extensive. It continues to spend most of its time cataloguing US violations of President Johnson's announced bombing restriction. The leading non-Communist front in North Vietnam--the Fatherland Front--issued a statement of support on 7 April which added little to charges already catalogued. The statement said that the US plans to continue "reconnaissance and provocative acts" over two coastal provinces just north of the 20th parallel and that US warships were continuing the shelling of "a number of coastal villages." It pointed to announced US troop build-ups in South Vietnam and US refusal to meet "completely the legitimate demands of the Vietnamese people," and concluded with a pledge of determination to fight till final victory.

Liberation radio commentary continues to play President Johnson's offer as an admission of defeat on the part of the US. The President's decision not to run for re-election is interpreted in the same way; it is called a "dangerous card played by Johnson in the hope that the American people will ask him to change his mind." The President is called an "old fox" and his 31 March offer a "perfidious plot." The "only path to peace," says Liberation radio, must include an unconditional end to the bombings and the withdrawal of all US troops from the South.

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More Americans to Hanoi: Five representatives of American antiwar groups who were scheduled to go to Hanoi late this month are now slated to make the trip on 10 May. [REDACTED]

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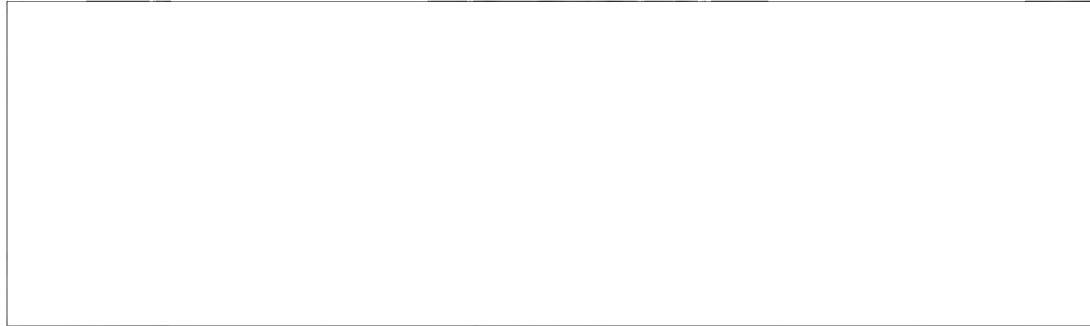
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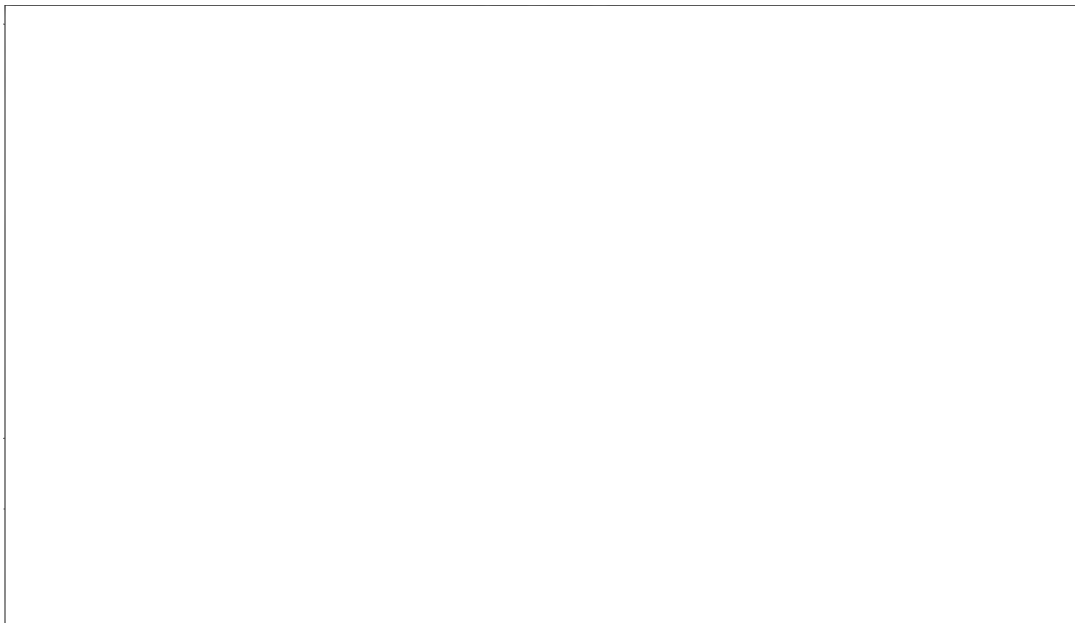
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